FAMOUS MINERAL FINDS.

RICH DISCOVERIES IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Luck of the Gold Miner—Big Nuggets Found in Australia—The Oliver Martin Chunk—Negro Fiddler's Mexican Mine—Early Discoveries of Coal Veins.

No vocation is so full of risks and possibilities as that of prospecting for minerals and following up a clue when found. This applies with special force to the pursuit of the most precious metals and stones. How many stories have been written around the imaginary discovery of a large nugget, which, just as things are going very badly with the finder, rescues him from despair and sets his feet on a foundation of gold!

Yet the fictions of the romancer can hardly outstrip solid facts, says the *Strand Magazine*. The history of mining is full of instances in which, either by accident or stroke of luck following on hard, deliberate work, a man has opened his hand and found wealth lying in the palm.

It will be interesting to glance at some of the most remarkable cases. We may fitly start with the royal metal. Chief among gold nuggets are the Welcome and the Welcome Stranger. The first weighing 2,217 ounces, was found at Ballarat, Victoria, in 1858; the second, 2,268 ounces in weight, at Dunolly, Victoria, in 1869. In both cases the fortunate discoverer netted more than £8,000 sterling by a blow of the pick.

Another typical instance of gold mining luck comes from Mount Alexander, in the same colony. A gang of five miners had sunk several holes unsuccessfully to depths ranging from about thirty to sixty feet, and were so disheartened that they decided to give up the search for "color" after one more attempt. Before the seventh hole was nine feet deep a rich "pocket" appeared, and in a few hours 120 pounds of pure gold had been secured. In New South Wales, almost simultaneously, an Australian black shepherd who amused himself with gold seeking happened to notice a glittering speck on the surface of a quartz boulder. He chipped off a piece with his tomahawk, and, lo! a mass of gold, scaling 120 pounds 9 ounces, lay revealed! The arrival of the nugget in Bathurst produced a gold fever which seemed to deprive hitherto sane men of their senses, and was largely responsible for the subsequent "rush" to Australia from all parts of the world.

The early history of the West Australian gold fields is marked by similar smiles of fortune. The Pilbarra field, to take an example, owes its discovery to a stone which a boy picked up to cast at a crow. Its weight being unusual for its size, the boy examined the missile and found that it contained a quantity of gold. Coolgardie, a name now so well known, is also associated with a curious incident. In 1892 Messrs. Bayley and Ford, starting from Southern Cross, plunged into the deserts, where they believed gold to exist. Bayley prospected a long time without success, and was returning to Perth very much down in luck when his fortunes were changed in a most casual manner. One night his horse, picketed outside of the tent, became so restless that he went out to quiet it, and on the way tripped over what he thought at first to be a stone, but which proved on closer inspection to be a huge nugget. A claim was at once pegged out, and in four weeks £10,000 had been realized. This claim lies at about the centre of Coolgardie, the town created by the consequent "rush."

We should expect the California gold mania of the early '50s to yield its quota of romantic stories. The discovery of gold in the Sacramento Valley was made accidentally during the construction of a tail-race for a water mill wheel. The owner of the mill observed some shining fragments in the banks of the new channel, and thinking that they were only mica or some other worthless substance, debated with himself for a time whether it would be worth while to pick them up. He decided to do so, and to his astonishment, found that they were scales of gold. This happened in 1848. Before a year had passed California, hitherto a scarcely explored country, became the focus of an unprecedented immigration of people of all conditions, who poured across the plains and deserts or came round by sea to San Francisco, determined to stake health and even life itself on the chances of the pan and sluice. A few made enormous fortunes, a large number secured competencies, but the majority learned by bitter experience that Fortune is a very fickle goddess indeed.

Among the lucky miners was one Oliver Martin. He and a companion named Flower had been prospecting for weeks without touching gold, and so great were the hardships endured that the two men almost died of exhaustion. While in extremities they were overtaken by a terrible storm, which killed Flower. His comrade, though terribly weakened by hunger and toil, felt it his duty to give the corpse a decent burial, and dug a grave at the foot of a tree. As he threw out the earth he struck a nugget, which under the name of "The Oliver Martin Chunk" has become famous as the largest ever found in the New World. It weighed 151 pounds, six ounces, and realized £7,254. The episode is truly extraordinary. Flower died in the search for gold, and his death reveals the gold he has so long sought. Martin, reduced to the depths of despondency by ill uses and the loss of his mate, suddenly finds himself a rich man; all the richer because his companion can no longer claim a share.

Another case of the irony of luck is furnished by a Frenchman of Eldorado county, who was so much overcome by the sudden discovery of a gold lump worth £1,000 that he went insane. As a contrast may be mentioned the good fortune of a couple of tramps, turned off a westward bound train because they could not pay their fares. While they stumbled along on foot they happened to find a nugget worth £550.

Even more welcome than the nugget, which may lie far away from other gold, is the discovery of a gold bed or vein. The auriferous regions of Alaska and northwest Canada furnish some startling records of rich strikes. None is more romantic than that connected with the name of George Carmack, a half breed trapper. One morning, after a night spent on the banks of the Bonanza Creek (as it was afterward called), he noticed among the ashes of his camp fire the "color" of gold, and soon realized that fortune had favored him. The winter of 1896-97 was just closing in, so that the 250 inhabitants of "Forty Mile," the nearest mining camp, who at once hastened to the creek, were secure from invaders until after the next year's thaw.

All winter long the lucky crowd shovelled out dirt so rich that, when the spring clean-up or washing came, as much as £160 worth of gold was taken out of a single pan! Some men made money steadily at the rate of $.7 a minute. One of the most curious episodes of this "strike" was the result of an act of sheer laziness. An ex-bartender of Forty Mile, being too sluggish to go up to the top of Bonanza Creek to peg out his claim as last comer, turned aside into a subsidiary creek, the Eldorado, and struck a deposit which subsequently yielded £600,000. Next spring those of the Bonanza workers who returned to San Francisco took with them more than a ton of gold dust and nuggets, done up in an extraordinary variety of receptacles, ranging from a deer-skin bag to a jam pot, and the gold rushes of '49 and '51 were repeated to Klondike.

Though gold may enrich a man at the expense of a minimum of work, more sensational fortunes have doubtless been won from silver mining. Silver usually occurs in chemical combination with lead, arsenic, sulphur and other elements, and is seldom found in nuggets. The ore must, therefore, be chemically treated to secure the comparatively small percentage of metal. Yet the yield of a rich silver vein is enormous.

Any one acquainted with American mining annals will at once think of the marvellous Comstock vein of Nevada, and its Big Bonanza, the largest body of silver ore ever struck by a miner. The great silver vein was first cut into in 1859 by two prospectors, McLaughlin and O'Riley, who both died poor and broken hearted. Other miners, who stuck to their claims, raised fortunes from the great treasure house of silver, became "nabobs" and spent their money royally without fear of its giving out.

Mexico is a veritable land of silver, just as England is a land of iron and coal. Its wealth attracted the Spaniards under Cortes nearly 400 years ago. But at that time the silver deposits had scarcely been touched, and it was not until the Spanish conquerors brought European mineralogical knowledge to bear on the great silver lodes of Sonora, Zacatecas, Guanajuato and Hidalgo that the real resources of the country were understood. At Arazuma, in Sonora, a mine owner discovered in the middle of the eighteenth century a solid silver mass weighing 2,700 pounds, which was only one of a number of similar finds. The Flores Mine of San Luis Potosi was struck by a poor priest, who for a mere trifle bought up a claim which had been abandoned as barren. His venture endowed him with £600,000 worth of silver.

In the same region a negro fiddler found among the ashes of his campfire—a curious parallel to the Carmack episode—a button of silver, which led to his becoming a millionaire. More recently, in 1826, two Indian peasants, so poor that they could not raise money to buy a meal, stumbled on the outcrop of a vein which yielded £52,000. Returning for a moment to the eighteenth century, we encounter the stirring history of a muleteer, one Peter Terreros, who struck the Real del Monte deposits in Hidalgo, and at the end of twelve years had amassed £3,000,000 sterling, besides being ennobled by the King of Spain for pecuniary services rendered.

In Chile the name of Godoy is associated with great riches. A hunter of this name was chasing guanacos, and, being tired, sat down under the shelter of a large rock, one part of which had a bright color. He cut off pieces with his knife—the substance of the rock at this point was quite soft—and had it assayed. The substance was recognized as silver lead. Godoy had discovered a vein containing an extraordinary amount of silver. His good fortune was afterward eclipsed by that of the brothers Bolados, fuel carriers by trade, who found in a crevice opened by an earthquake an enormous block of silver ore worth nearly £250,000 sterling.

The coal fields of the United States, to which our transatlantic cousins are so largely indebted for their industrial success, were in several cases discovered accidentally.

In 1760 a boy was fishing in a Virginian stream, when he ran short of bait, and while hunting for more he saw in the bank of the stream a streak of black stone, which proved to be rich bituminous coal. Thus was started the soft coal industry of the Eastern States, which to-day has reached such vast proportions. The even more valuable anthracite or hard coal deposits of Pennsylvania were also discovered by sportsmen. Philip Ginther in 1791 struck the first signs of anthracite in the southern coal field. This was how it happened: Being short of food, he went out into the woods with his gun to look for deer. A day's hard walking brought him no luck, and he was returning home at nightfall, very dispirited, when he kicked something hard which rolled away before him. He stopped and picked it up and wondered if this was the coal that he had heard people speak of as likely to exist in that region. Such it proved to be.

Another coal field in the same State was found by a hunter who happened to light his camp fire on the outcrop of a seam and was awakened by the resultant blaze. Once again the camp fire played an important part in mineral discoveries. A third seam was tapped by a man digging in pursuit of a ground hog that had gone to earth.

From the prizes drawn in the lottery of mining we may turn to the blanks which fall to the majority of prospectors. Sometimes good fortune never appears at all; at others it just evades the grasp of him who, consciously or unconsciously, is on the point of seizing it.

Petroleum now ranks second to coal as a producer of heat, light and power. More than 5,000,000,000 gallons of this liquid are raised annually in different parts of the world. It was not until the year 1859, however, that petroleum began to play its present important part among the commodities which conduce most to the comfort of mankind. In that year Col. E. L. Drake, formerly a conductor on the New York and New Haven Railroad, was engaged by David Fletcher and Peter Wilson, two residents at Titusville, Pa., to sink an oil well in the Oil Creek Valley. He was much hampered by quicksands, which filled the bore as fast as it was drilled, and so he conceived the idea of driving down an iron pipe to keep out intruding substances until rock should be reached. People regarded him as a madman for trying to draw oil from the earth through a tube "like a boy sucks cider from a barrel through a straw."

He persevered, nevertheless, and at a depth of thirty-three feet struck hard rock. Operations were continued until £2,000 had been spent, and then, as no oil had yet appeared, he was told to pay off debts and give up the attempt. On the day before the receipt of this order, on August 29, 1859, the drill, at a depth of sixty-nine feet, suddenly fell six inches into a crevice of the rock and the bore hole filled with oil almost to the surface. A pump was rigged and 1,500 gallons a day were raised and sold for a dollar a gallon. Thousands of people flocked to the spot eager as gold seekers to profit by the discovery. Farms all around were leased at enormous prices. The countryside soon echoed with the sound of many drilling outfits and oil flowed up in torrents, a large part of the yield running to waste for lack of barrels in which to transport the oil. Thus began an industry which has added £400,000,000 to the wealth of the United States.

Yet Col. Drake himself missed wealth. In the first place he omitted to patent his well sinking process and so threw away a fortune. In the second place an accident set the well alight and destroyed the pump, with the result that before another could be rigged, rival bores had already tapped the oil bearing strata and seriously reduced prices. This bad luck seems all the worse because it so happened that Drake's oil well was the shallowest ever sunk in Pennsylvania! If a thousand wells had been sunk at other spots in Oil Creek to a depth of only sixty-nine feet, every one of them would probably have been "dry as a powder horn." Still, it is impossible to calculate what civilization has gained by that happy freak of chance. A single foot more and Drake would have raised his drill for the last time and the priceless rock oil deposits of the United States—perhaps of the world—might have untapped for decades.

Another striking instance of bad luck is that of M. Porte, a Frenchman who, in 1830, exploited a mine at Monte Catini in Tuscany. For seven years he burrowed for copper and at last found himself in circumstances so straightened that he sold the mine for the proverbial old song. The purchasers at once cut into a mass of ore which returned a profit of £4,000, and the mine yielded £40,000 annually for many years, making the fortunate proprietors millionaires. The fact that he had so narrowly missed a prize so preyed on M. Porte's mind that he died of a broken heart.

THE NAVY'S LOST SHIPS.

Causes of Naval Accidents and the Punishments Inflicted.

Mr. Weeks of Massachusetts in the House of Representatives.

In 1865 the U. S. S. San Jacinto ran aground on the Bahama Banks. She was not seriously injured, but her commanding officer was court-martialled and sentenced to three years suspension; he appealed from this decision and the President ordered a new trial by a different court, which resulted in the same sentence being imposed as in the first instance.

January 4, 1866, the U. S. tug Narcissus foundered in the Gulf of Mexico. A volunteer ensign was in command and he had a reputation as a competent officer. A violent hurricane passed over the Gulf at the time, and as all hands were lost it is presumed that the accident was unavoidable.

In June, 1867, the U. S. S. Sacramento was lost on a known reef in the Bay of Bengal. Her captain and navigator were tried by court-martial, were both found guilty and sentenced to three years suspension and to be publicly reprimanded. In both cases the sentence was reduced to two years by the Secretary of the Navy.

In 1867 the U. S. S. Monongahela, while anchored in the harbor of Fredickstadt, island of St. Croix, was picked up by a tidal wave and landed on a wharf. The next wave in receding carried the ship to the entrance of the harbor and deposited her on a coral reef, from which she was later removed but little damaged and with small loss of life.

In the same storm the U. S. S. De Soto, anchored in a St. Thomas harbor, was treated in a similar way and, as in the case of the Monongahela, she was later floated with but little damage and small loss of life. No court-martial was ordered in either of these cases.

August 13, 1868, the U. S. S. Fredonia and the U. S. S. Wateree were anchored in the harbor of Arica, Peru, where they were overwhelmed by a tidal wave, resulting from an earthquake, which carried the Wateree half a mile inland, from which position the ship was never moved; the Fredonia was sunk in the harbor by the same wave and most of her officers and crew were lost. In neither case was a court-martial ordered.

In 1868 the U. S. S. Suwanee was lost in Shadwell Passage, Alaska. There are irregular and unusually strong currents in this locality, and while the ship had been furnished with the only available charts, they were imperfect and incomplete. Her captain was court-martialled and exonerated.

January 24, 1870, the U. S. S. Oneida while putting to sea in Yokohama Bay was in the night run into by the English steamer Bombay and sank fifteen minutes after the collision, carrying down nearly all of her officers and crew. A court of inquiry showed conclusively that the Oneida had the right of way and no court-martial was ordered.

In 1870 the U. S. S. Saginaw was carried by unknown and uncharted currents onto a reef in the Pacific Ocean and was lost. Her commander, Lieutenant-Commander Montgomery Sicard, one of the most distinguished officers of the navy, was court-martialled and exonerated.

In 1874 the U. S. S. Brooklyn ran aground near Key West, Fla. She was floated and no damage was done. Her Captain was court-martialled and acquitted.

In 1875 the U. S. S. Saranac, while cruising in uncharted waters in Seymour Narrows off the Alaskan coast, was thrown by a whirlpool on a sunken rock and lost. No court-martial was ordered.

In 1877 the U. S. S. Huron was lost during a severe storm on Cape Hatteras; as her captain, navigator and the deck officer, who was on duty at the time, as well as nearly all of the other officers and men, went down with the ship, there was no court-martial ordered.

In 1881 the U. S. S. Rogers, a whaler purchased to take part in the Greely relief expedition, while frozen in the ice in the Arctic Ocean, caught fire and, being saturated with oil, was quickly destroyed. No court-martial was considered necessary.

In 1883 the U. S. S. Ashuelot was run on a rock off the coast of China and lost. Her Captain was court-martialled and dismissed from the service. It is worth noting that this officer had previously been dismissed for drunkenness and restored to the service by act of Congress.

In 1888 the U. S. S. Enterprise ran onto a submerged barrier in Christiana Bay, which was new and did not show on the charts furnished the ship. The ship was not damaged and no court-martial was ordered.

In 1889 the U. S. S. Trenton, Vandalia and Nipsic were lying at anchor in the harbor of Apia, Samoan Islands, in company with a German squadron of three ships and H. M. S. Calliope, when such a terrific hurricane arose that the American and German ships, being unable to steam against it, were wrecked; the Englishman, being new ship, with, for that day, powerful engines, was able to get to sea. The Trenton and Vandalia were a total loss; the Nipsic, however, was later pulled off the reef and repaired. Several officers and many men were lost. No court-martial was ever ordered.

In 1889 the U. S. S. Constellation was run aground in Lynnhaven Bay, but received no injury. Her captain was court-martialled and sentenced to two years suspension. This sentence was reduced to one year by the Secretary of the Navy.

In 1891 the U. S. S. Dispatch was run aground and lost on the New Jersey coast, and although a court of inquiry found the Captain, navigator and officer of the deck negligent the Secretary of the Navy decided that a court-martial was not necessary.

In 1891 the U. S. S. Galena, while being towed by the tug Nina, was run aground on Gay Head, off the Massachusetts coast, the course of the tug being directed from the Galena. The Galena had no deviation table and the Captain had failed to compare his compass with the tug's. The ships were in a dense fog at the time of the accident. The Captain of the Galena was suspended for one year.

The same year and at the same time the tug Luiana, while proceeding in the fog to the relief of the Galena, ran on a rock. Her commanding officer was court-martialled and acquitted.

In 1892 the U. S. S. Alliance was run against the breakwater in Yokohama harbor, with slight damage. The Captain was court-martialled and suspended for one year.

In 1892 the U. S. S. Tallapoosa was run down and sunk by a coal laden schooner. A court of inquiry showed that the Tallapoosa had the right of way and no court-martial was ordered.

In 1893 the U. S. S. Mohican was run on a rock off the badly charted Alaskan coast. The Captain was court-martialled and dismissed.

In 1894 the U. S. S. Kearsarge was run onto Roncador Reef, in the Caribbean Sea, and lost. Her Captain and navigator were each sentenced to two years suspension and in both cases the sentence was reduced to one year by the Secretary of the Navy.

In August, 1894, the U. S. S. Adams was run aground on St. Paul Island, Bering Sea. The accident was due to unknown or irregular currents. Her acting captain and navigator were sentenced to one year's suspension, which was reduced to six months by the Secretary of the Navy.

In 1898 the U. S. S. Maine was blown up in Havana harbor. No court-martial was ordered.

In 1899 the U. S. S. Charleston was, while using old Spanish charts on the Philippine coast, run onto an uncharted rock and lost. Her officers were held blameless.

In 1901 the U. S. S. Yosemite was by a tidal wave driven ashore on the island of Guam and then carried to sea, where she foundered. In this case the officers were acquitted.

In 1903 the U. S. S. Frolic, while entering the harbor of Cebu at night, was run on a reef, from which she was later removed, little damage having been done. Her commanding officer was sentenced to receive a public reprimand.

February 26, 1903, the tug Leyden was, during a violent storm, run onto rocks off Block Island. Her commanding officer was court-martialled and acquitted of negligence.

In 1903 the U. S. torpedo boat Winslow collided with a ferryboat in New York harbor. Her commanding officer was sentenced to lose three numbers and receive a public reprimand.

In 1904 the U. S. S. Culgoa collided with and sank a schooner. The court-martial developed the fact that the Culgoa had the right of way, and her captain was acquitted.

In 1905 the U. S. S. Eagle was run on a rock and slightly damaged. Her commanding officer was sentenced to lose four numbers.

May 17, 1905, the U. S. S. Detroit, while leaving the harbor of Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, was twice run aground. Her Captain was court-martialled and dismissed from the service.

These thirty-seven accidents include twenty-two ships lost for the following reasons: 5; by hurricane or by tidal waves, which human power could not have foreseen or controlled, 6; by uncharted currents or on uncharted rocks, 6; by collision in cases in which the man of war had the right of way and therefore her officers were not at fault, 2; the U. S. S. Maine blown up in Havana harbor, 1; the U. S. S. Rogers burned, 1; the U. S. tug Leyden, a small vessel, lost in a violent storm and her commanding officer found without fault, 1; and there were 5 ships lost when the accident presumably should have been avoided. In one of these cases the Captain was dismissed, in one the responsible officers were lost and in the other three the sentence of the court was reduced by the Secretary of the Navy or no court was ordered by him.

TERROR TO FROGS.

A Ferocious Goldfish Which Is an Expert Butter Out.

A gold fish which has run amuck is one of the curiosities of New Brighton, Pa. One of the residents has ornamented his grounds with a number of small ponds, in which he grows water lilies and keeps goldfish.

One pond in particular, says *Outing*, is inhabited by a single goldfish, a large black one, about three years old. This lonely hermit has taken a great dislike to the small frogs which swarm in all the pools at this time of year, and will not permit a single frog to come into his pond.

The moment a frog jumps in the fish attacks it, lashing the water with his tail, butting the frog with his head until he drives it out. The frogs swim about in a dazed way and finally climb out.

Almost any evening a number of disconsolate little frogs can be seen sitting in a row on the brick edge of the pond, desiring but not daring to jump in.

The fish lately has become such an autocrat that he will not permit a frog even to hang a foot in the water, working himself into such a frenzy, lashing about and leaping out of the water, that the frogs withdraw in fright and bewilderment. The incident is both amusing and pathetic, depending on whether viewed from the point of observation of a spectator or a frog.

DOGS NOT ALLOWED IN STABLES.

Are No Longer Considered Good Companions for Fast Trotters.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Dogs are no longer the correct thing as stable companions of horses. Some years ago every trotter or pacer of prominence, and a good many of no distinction, had a faithful dog in its stall, and there was a sort of superstition among trainers that a dogless horse would not amount to much. Real champions always had dogs.

'Way back in the days of Goldsmith Maid, that wonderful mare was accompanied on her travels by a small Scotch terrier, for which the old mare had some affection, although she was jealous of the beast, and when "Old Charlie," who took care of the mare and slept in the stall with her and the dog, made too much of the terrier, the mare would run the dog out of the place without ceremony. And when finally the dog disappeared for good the mare did not seem to miss it.

Cats take naturally to horses, and most horses like cats. The Godolphin Arabian, founder of the English thoroughbred family of to-day, that figures in Eugene Sue's works as the noblest animal of his kind, had for companion a cat that slept on the stallion's back and fed from his manger. But in the necessities of modern campaigning cats are too apt to be lost to make them available for horse companions, and few are seen, although now and then one turns up at a minor meeting.

At Cleveland a couple of summers ago one trainer had four tame doves that could not be induced to leave his horses and that when the stable moved from one town to another were always ready to go into their cage for shipment.

Some trainers object to having dogs with the horses. Peter V. Johnston, who has brought out some of the best nags on the harness turf, says no dogs in his. He had one along some years ago and it made friends with the best horse in the string. One day the trotter accidentally stepped on the dog's toes while moving about the stall, whereupon the cur snapped back and nearly severed a hind tendon for the trotter, ruining a $10,000 racing proposition in an instant.

John Turner never had a dog along in all the years he campaigned trotters. Also he steered clear of black horses. Not one stable nags in Turner's barn after one year of terrifying experience. He had always known they were bad luck, but that season a patron bought Black Frank, a trotter that looked like the real thing. He went lame before he had been in the barn a day, and then misfortunes followed one another until finally Nettie, the best trotting mare of terrifying day, lay down and died. Turner is now with the runners, but his antipathy to black horses is still rampant.